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Operational activities for development

Report of the Second Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2008, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its sixty-third session the item entitled "Operational activities for development" and to allocate it to the Second Committee.

2. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on the item at its 9th and 10th meetings, on 15 October 2008. An account of the Committee's discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/63/SR.9 and 10). Attention is also drawn to the general debate held by the Committee at its 2nd to 6th meetings, from 6 to 8 October (see A/C.2/63/SR.2-6). Action was taken on the item at the 19th, 29th and 31st meetings, on 28 October, 25 November and 10 December (see A/C.2/63/SR.19, 29 and 31).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the comprehensive statistical analysis of the financing of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for 2006 (A/63/71-E/2008/46);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the trends in contributions to operational activities for development of the United Nations system and measures to promote an adequate, predictable and expanding base of United Nations development assistance (A/63/201);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the implications of aligning the strategic planning cycles of the United Nations funds and programmes with the comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development (A/63/207);

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(d) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (A/63/205);

(e) Letter dated 11 June 2008 from the representative of Mozambique to the Secretary-General (A/63/85-E/2008/83);

(f) Letter dated 3 October 2008 from the representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Ministerial Declaration adopted by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 and China at their thirty-second annual meeting, held at United Nations Headquarters on 26 September 2008 (A/63/464);

(g) Letter dated 5 November 2008 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairperson of the Second Committee (A/C.2/63/7).

4. At the 9th meeting, on 15 October, introductory statements were made by the Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs and the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (see A/C.2/63/SR.9).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolutions A/C.2/63/L.4 and A/C.2/63/L.48

5. At the 19th meeting, on 28 October, the representative of Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Operational activities for development" (A/C.2/63/L.4), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolution 62/208 of 19 December 2007 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system,

"*Reaffirming* the importance of the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development, through which the General Assembly establishes key system-wide policy orientations for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the United Nations system,

"*Noting with concern* the declining trends in real contributions to operational activities for development,

"1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General and of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women;

"2. *Also takes note of* Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/2 of 18 July 2008 on progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

"(b) To promote the continuation of the upward trend in real contributions to operational activities for development to identify obstacles to the achievement of that goal and to make appropriate recommendations in this regard;

"(c) To promote the predictability and the multi-year pledging of funding for operational activities for development;

"(d) To promote an appropriate balance between core and non-core contributions;

"12. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session a report on measures taken in response to paragraph 11 above and which also contains information on contributions made to the United Nations operational activities in particular and official development assistance in general as well as feedback from the developed countries on obstacles to the achievement of the aims elaborated in paragraph 11 above;

"Aligning the strategic planning cycles of the United Nations funds and programmes with the comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

"13. *Decides* to change the comprehensive policy review of operational activities from a triennial to a quadrennial cycle in order to better provide policy guidance to the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies;

"14. *Requests* the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme to implement the changes, if any, required to align their planning cycles with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, including budgetary processes, as necessary, and to report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session on adjustments made to fit the new comprehensive review cycle;

"15. *Recommends* that the Executive Board of the World Food Programme consider changing the Programme's planning cycle in order to align its strategic plan with the new quadrennial policy review, by adopting a fixed four-year planning period, starting in ..., with a mechanism that enables sufficient flexibility to adjust and respond to emerging situations in line with its mandates;

"South-South cooperation

"16. *Welcomes* the fourth cooperation framework for South-South cooperation, and requests the relevant organizations of the United Nations development system, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, to take the necessary actions to fully implement it and in this regard, encourages Member States in a position to do so to support the United Nations Development Programme and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation in implementing the framework."

6. At its 31st meeting, on 11 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Operational activities for development" (A/C.2/63/L.48), submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Troy Torrington (Guyana), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.4.

7. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications (see A/C.2/63/SR.31).

8. Also at its 31st meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.48 (see para. 17, draft resolution I).

9. After the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the Vice-Chairman.

10. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.48, draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.4 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

B. Draft resolutions A/C.2/63/L.43 and A/C.2/63/L.63

11. At the 29th meeting, on 25 November, the representative of Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation" (A/C.2/63/L.43), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Reaffirming* its resolution 33/134 of 19 December 1978, in which it endorsed the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries,

"*Recalling* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

"*Recalling also* its resolution 62/209 of 19 December 2007, in which it decided to convene a High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation,

"*Taking note with appreciation* of the report of the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation submitted pursuant to its resolution 62/209,

"*Reaffirming* its previous relevant resolutions pertaining to South-South cooperation,

"1. *Decides* that the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation shall be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York in September 2009 and at the highest possible political level, including the participation of Heads of State and Government, ministers, special representatives and other representatives;

"2. *Also decides* to designate the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation to act as the Preparatory Committee for the Conference with the mandate to decide on the modalities, the date of the Conference and the preparation of its final outcome and, in this regard, decides to postpone the sixteenth session of the High-level Committee to November 2009;

"3. *Further decides* to entrust the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation with proposing a programme of work for the Preparatory Committee in consultation with Member States, taking into account relevant meetings scheduled for 2009 and their expected outcomes; and in this context, determines that the Preparatory Committee for the Conference should convene its organizational meeting in January 2009;

"4. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, to take all appropriate measures to implement the present resolution."

12. At its 31st meeting, on 11 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation" (A/C.2/63/L.63), submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Troy Torrington (Guyana), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.43.

13. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications (see A/C.2/63/SR.31).

14. Also at its 31st meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.63 (see para. 17, draft resolution II).

15. After the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the Vice-Chairman (see A/C.2/63/SR.31).

16. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.63, draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.43 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendations of the Second Committee

17. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I
Operational activities for development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 62/208 of 19 December 2007 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system,

Reaffirming the importance of the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development, through which the General Assembly establishes key system-wide policy orientations for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the United Nations system,

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General[1] and of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women;[2]

2. *Also takes note* of Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/2 of 18 July 2008 on the progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

Funding of operational activities of the United Nations development system

3. *Reiterates* paragraphs 18 to 20, on the comprehensive statistical analysis of the financing of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, of Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/2;[3]

4. *Requests* the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, making use of existing capacities within the Secretariat and, if necessary, voluntary contributions, to take the necessary steps to integrate by 2010 information from the report on United Nations system technical cooperation expenditures and its statistical addendum into the report on the comprehensive statistical analysis of the financing of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, to provide appropriate online access to this information and to report to the Economic and Social Council in 2009 on progress in this regard, and encourages the Executive

[1] Reports of the Secretary-General on the comprehensive statistical analysis of the financing of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for 2006 (A/63/71-E/2008/46); on the trends in contributions to operational activities for development of the United Nations system and measures to promote an adequate, predictable and expanding base of United Nations development assistance (A/63/201); and on the implications of aligning the strategic planning cycles of the United Nations funds and programmes with the comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development (A/63/207).

[2] A/63/205.

[3] See also A/63/71-E/2008/46.

Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund to take the necessary decision to make this possible;

5. *Expresses concern* at:

(a) The fact that the upward trend in contributions in real terms received by the United Nations system for operational activities since 2002 came to a halt in 2006;[4]

(b) The continuing imbalance between core and non-core funding;

(c) The limited progress towards greater predictability and adequacy of funding;

6. *Emphasizes* that increasing financial contributions to the United Nations development system is key to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and in this regard recognizes the mutually reinforcing links between increased effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of the United Nations development system, achieving concrete results in assisting developing countries in eradicating poverty and achieving sustained economic growth and sustainable development through operational activities for development and the overall resourcing of the United Nations development system;

7. *Stresses* that core resources, because of their untied nature, continue to be the bedrock of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

8. *Urges* donor countries and other countries in a position to do so to substantially increase their voluntary contributions to the core/regular budgets of the United Nations development system, in particular its funds, programmes and specialized agencies, and to contribute on a multi-year basis, in a sustained and predictable manner;

9. *Invites* countries to consider increasing their contributions to the budgets of the specialized agencies in order to enable the United Nations development system to respond in a more comprehensive and effective manner to the demands of the United Nations development agenda;

10. *Emphasizes* the importance of taking measures to broaden the donor base and increase the number of donor countries and other partners making financial contributions to the United Nations development system in order to reduce reliance of the United Nations development system on a limited number of donors;

11. *Welcomes* the growth in funding provided to the United Nations system from non-governmental sources, such as civil society, private organizations and foundations;

12. *Notes* that non-core resources represent an important supplement to the regular resource base of the United Nations development system to support operational activities for development, thus contributing to an increase in total resources, while recognizing that non-core resources are not a substitute for core resources and that unearmarked contributions are vital for the coherence and harmonization of the operational activities for development;

[4] See A/63/201.

13. *Underscores* the importance of mobilizing more predictable levels of voluntary contributions to the core operational programmes of the United Nations development system, recognizes the establishment of thematic trust funds, multi-donor trust funds and other voluntary non-earmarked funding mechanisms linked to organization-specific funding frameworks and strategies established by the respective governing bodies as funding modalities complementary to regular budgets, and encourages the measurement of the funding received by the United Nations development system through these modalities as part of the comprehensive statistical analysis of financing of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

14. *Recognizes* the increasing complexity of the international aid architecture, and in this regard encourages the organizations of the United Nations development system to continue to explore ways to engage with other development partners in order to strengthen their complementarity and the implementation of their mandates, taking into account the importance of national priorities of programme countries, and requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the United Nations development system, to report on efforts in this regard in the context of his annual report on the implementation of resolution 62/208;

15. *Encourages* the organizations of the United Nations system, if they have not done so, to mobilize and allocate resources, on the basis of a strategic plan, including a multi-year resource programming framework;

16. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to take, in full consultation with Member States and observer States, measures:

(a) To promote an adequate and expanding base of development assistance from the United Nations system, taking into account, inter alia, the development priorities of programme countries;

(b) To promote an upward trend in real contributions to operational activities for development, to identify obstacles to the achievement of that goal, and to make appropriate recommendations in this regard;

(c) To promote the predictability and the multi-year pledging of funding for operational activities for development;

(d) To promote an appropriate balance between core and non-core contributions;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report, in the context of his annual report on the implementation of resolution 62/208, on measures taken in response to paragraph 16 above, bearing in mind the provisions of the present resolution, and including feedback from Member States on ways to achieve the aims contained therein;

Aligning the strategic planning cycles of the United Nations funds and programmes with the comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

18. *Decides* to change the comprehensive policy review of operational activities from a triennial to a quadrennial cycle in order to better provide policy guidance to the United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies;

19. *Also decides* in this regard to hold its next comprehensive policy review in 2012 and subsequent reviews on a quadrennial basis;

20. *Urges* the funds and programmes and encourages the specialized agencies to carry out the changes required, if any, to align their planning cycles with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, including the implementation of midterm reviews as necessary, and to report to the Economic and Social Council on adjustments made to fit the new comprehensive review cycle at the substantive session of the Council.

Draft resolution II
High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 33/134 of 19 December 1978, in which it endorsed the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries,[1]

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[2]

Recalling also its resolution 62/209 of 19 December 2007, in which it decided to convene a High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation,

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation submitted pursuant to its resolution 62/209,[3]

Taking note of the draft fourth cooperation framework for South-South cooperation (2009-2011)[4] and the recommendations contained therein,

Reaffirming its previous relevant resolutions pertaining to South-South cooperation,

Requests that the President of the General Assembly entrust the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation with undertaking, while making use of the existing coordination mechanisms of the United Nations system, the necessary consultations with Member States in order to prepare for the proposed High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, with a view to the Assembly's taking a decision, during its sixty-third session, on the nature, date, budgetary implications, objectives and modalities of the Conference.

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11 and corrigendum), chap. I.

[2] See resolution 60/1.

[3] A/C.2/63/7, annex, attachment III.

[4] DP/CF/SSC/4/Rev.1.